

Application No. 10/721,358
Reply to Office Action dated 12/16/2005

Docket No.: 1020/0132PUS1

REMARKS

Favorable reconsideration and allowance of the subject application are respectfully requested. Claims 1-19 are pending in the present application, with claims 1 and 11 being independent. Claims 18-19 have been added by this amendment, which do not add any new subject matter.

Claim Rejections Under 35 USC §102

The Examiner rejected: claims 1, 2, and 4-17 under 35 U.S.C. 102(b) as being anticipated by Glienicke (US 6,224,221); and claims 1, 4-9, and 16-17 under 35 U.S.C. 102(e) as being anticipated by Zysnarksi et al. (US 6,590,174). These rejections are respectfully traversed insofar as they pertain to the presently pending claims.

I. Independent Claim 1.

Independent claim 1 is directed to a control element having a combined scale and corona illumination, wherein the scale is a part of a panel that is designed to work together with the control element. The control element includes: an optical light guide that includes two parts, which are partially separated by an annular slot, such that parts of the panel engage or project into the slot; a light rotor that extends towards the optical light guide to a height necessary for light transport; and a light source located below the light rotor.

The Examiner alleges that Glienicke teaches all of the features of independent claim 1. Applicants respectfully disagree. More specifically, Applicants respectfully submit that Glienicke fails to teach or suggest at least the features of: (1) an optical light guide that includes two parts that are partially separated by an annular slot; or (2) that parts of the panel engage or project into the slot,

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as recited in independent claim 1.

The Examiner alleges that the optical light guide is taught by the combination of the light transmitting body 6 and the light transmitting body 11. Referring to Fig. 1 of Glienicke, it can be clearly seen that these light transmitting bodies 6, 11 are not partially separated. In fact, they are completely separate, and is further emphasized in Col. 2, lines 38-41 of Glienicke, which teaches that “the light-transmitting body 6 terminates with its peripheral part 8 in a transparent housing section 9...[t]his housing section 9 includes...a light-transmitting body 11,” emphasis added. Thus, because neither the light transmitting body 6 or the light transmitting body 11 of the housing 9 have an annular slot that partially separates each one into two parts, Glienicke fails to teach this feature.

Furthermore, because Glienicke does not have an annular slot, parts of a panel cannot engage with the slot or project into the slot. Thus, Glienicke also clearly fails to teach this feature. In addition thereto, Applicants note that the Examiner alleges that light rotor as claimed is supposedly taught by the rotatable knob 1. Applicants fail to understand how the rotatable knob 1 of Glienicke could even remotely be construed to teach the feature of “a light rotor that extends towards the optical light guide to a height necessary for light transport.” Thus, Applicants also respectfully request that the Examiner clarify the rejection, if maintained.

Regarding the Zysnarski et al. reference, Applicants also respectfully submit that Zysnarski et al. fails to teach or suggest at least a control element that has a combined scale and corona illumination, whereby the scale is part of a panel. It appears that the Examiner is alleging that the bezel 24 of Zysnarski et al. supposedly teaches the feature of a panel. The bezel 24, however, contains absolutely no teaching that a scale (that can be illuminated) is a part thereof. Thus, Zysnarski et al. fails to teach or suggest all of the features of at least independent claim 1.

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II. Independent Claim 11.

Independent claim 11 is directed to a control element that includes: a rotary knob; a corona substantially circumscribing the rotary knob, the corona being adapted to emit light therefrom; a scale substantially circumscribing the corona and the rotary knob, the scale being adapted to emit light therefrom; an optical light guide having an annular slot provided therein, the annular slot being formed to receive a projection extending from the scale; the optical light guide directing light towards the scale and the corona; and a light rotor that directs light from a light source towards the optical light guide.

On page 3 of the outstanding Office Action, the Examiner alleges that Glienicke discloses a corona and scale and relies on the transparent housing 9 and the scale 10 of Glienicke for support thereof. However, referring to col. 2, line 41, of Glienicke, it is taught that the "housing section 9 includes a scale 10." Thus, the scale 10 does not circumscribe the housing section 9.

Furthermore, as noted above with respect to claim 1, neither of the light transmitting bodies 6, 11 of Glienicke have an annular slot provided therein, whereby the slot receives a projection extending from the scale. Thus, Glienicke et al. does not anticipate at least independent claim 11.

Dependent claims 2-10 and 12-17 and new dependent claims 18-19 should be considered allowable at least for depending from an allowable base claim.

Accordingly, in view of the above discussion, Applicants respectfully request that the Examiner withdraw the rejections.

Claim Rejections Under 35 USC §103

The Examiner rejected claims 2, and 3-10 under 35 U.S.C. 103(a) as being unpatentable over Zysnarski et al. This rejection is respectfully traversed.

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Claims 2 and 3-10 are dependent claims that should be considered allowable at least for depending from an allowable base claim.

Accordingly, withdrawal of the rejection is respectfully requested.

Conclusion

In view of the above amendments and remarks, this application appears to be in condition for allowance and the Examiner is, therefore, requested to reexamine the application and pass the claims to issue.

Should there be any outstanding matters that need to be resolved in the present application, the Examiner is respectfully requested to contact Martin Geissler (Reg. 51,011) at telephone number (703) 621-7140, which is located in the Washington, DC area.

If necessary, the Commissioner is hereby authorized in this, concurrent, and future replies, to charge payment or credit any overpayment to Deposit Account No. 50-3828 for any additional fees required under 37 C.F.R. §§ 1.16 or 1.17; particularly, extension of time fees.

Date: June 15, 2006

Respectfully submitted,

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